

SECESSION.

Secession as a rule is to be lamented. Unless there is a powerful excuse, it should be avoided as it often results in disaster.

There are many things, both in state and church, that do not suit us here on the earth, but this is no reason that we should go out on the sea and live in a boat away from state and church. But we are to bear the reproaches of sin for a season, and as pilgrims we are seeking a country where peace and happiness reigns.

The Nihilist leaves Russia and comes to this country with the expectation of finding a panacea for all his ills and grievances, but here, even, we find him trying to execute his same rebellious ideas in this free country. This only proves him a rebel wherever he may be. It proves, too, that no place on earth can be found where perfect peace and happiness is supreme.

We, as citizens of this country, might all find minor grievances sufficient to incite us to rebellion if we were to allow our inclinations to run away with our reason and judgment. If we were to seek England, France, Italy, or any other country in the hope of relief from all grievances, we would find that we, as citizens, would have to bear with many grievances we had thought to be free from, or the condition, which we hoped for could not be found.

This same reasoning can be brought into the church. Some people think if they go to some other church there peace and happiness will exist and prevail; but they find themselves sadly mistaken in the end. A man may try them all to his heart's content and he will find, as a rule, the same everywhere.

We find this same condition in the days of the apostles. There were Hymenu's, Alexandria's, Sorcer Simon's and others; there were some for Paul and some for Appollis and some for Christ, and some for Cephus. We find, too, our blessed Lord had a traitor, a liar and a doubter in his small number of twelve disciples, but we do not find him withdrawing from them on this account.

We may come closer home. The

young man and woman, before they attain their majority, or become heads of families, imagine that when they become "their own man and woman" they will be free from vexations, and peace and happiness will flow to them like a river to the ocean. But what do they find? They find, as a rule, the same vexations, grievances and unrest and unsatisfied condition as before.

We may still come closer home. Show me the first man without a sin and he shall be allowed to cast the first stone. Show me the man without sin, and I will show you a "liar and the truth not in him." If there be one here now without sin, there might have been one here when Christ was compelled, for the want of one to come from heaven and die for all mankind. Then so long as we cannot find a sinless man or woman, we cannot find a sinless family; and so long as we cannot find a sinless man, woman or family, we cannot find a sinless church; and so long as we cannot find a sinless church, we cannot expect to find such a neighborhood or nation.

I am glad this is the true condition; for if we found that place or person here, we would not care to find or seek for a better person and place. But this sinful, unsatisfied condition creates within us a desire to seek such a place and such a person.

We are here as soldiers of the cross to fight sin, not evade it by getting out of the church to escape it. We are to fight evil, not go to a far off uninhabited island to get out of its way.

What would be thought of a soldier who, when a battle was to be fought, would strip off his uniform and make off for the woods, or slip into a hiding place? Such a soldier deserves not that name, but that of a timid coward.

I abhor secret organizations with all my soul. I fight them with the sword of the spirit and the helmet of salvation. I condemn them at a wholesale rate, too. But they tell me that they exist in our own fair church in some places. But I will not leave the church to avoid them but fight them to the finish here and now.

I know some may claim there are churches that disfellowships secrecy, but I know of two men, one each a member of the anti-secret-order church-

es who are members of secret societies, but these same men try to conceal, by deceit, their affiliation with such orders.

I fight church revelry, or any kind of revelry, such as festivals, entertainments and such like, but I find them here and there in the church, but I am not responsible for a thing which I cannot prevent, and which I have been fighting.

I fight pride in dress and all kinds of pride, but apparently, I find it at places in the church; but so long as I am not proud myself, and preach it down, I am not responsible.

I abhor adultery, drunkenness, lying and evil speaking, and I preach down on these evils with all my might, but I find such sins occasionally in my own congregations; but so long as I abhor them and preach such sins down, I am not responsible.

The apostle exhorts us to reprove, rebuke and admonish and that before all that, all may be profited and fear to do evil.

The place for each father, mother, citizen and Christian is to fight evil in the home, state and church and not to abandon and withdraw from these sacred institutions and allow sin and anarchy to have dominion over them.

If those who withdraw from the church be better than the church, then they are the one by all means to remain in the church to help the church up to a holier and happier condition.

But does separation from a non-creed church, or any church, guarantee peace at mind and freedom from the pollution of sin among other associates and brethren?

History tells us how the Puritans prayed, and stunted their bodies, and suffered anguish of soul, to get to a land where they could worship God according to their own conscience's dictates. But after they found that land, which their hearts panted for, they soon found diversities of opinion arising among their own brethren which culminated in the most cruel atrocities and akin to those from which they had just escaped.

Again, see the brave colonists, our pioneer fathers, how they with one accord fought to throw off the yoke of tyrant England.